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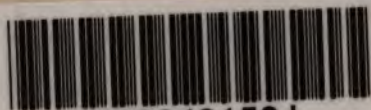
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HANDBOOK
TO
ARCHAEOLOGY.

REV.^D S. RADCLIFF

LAURIE, PUBLISHER, LONDON,





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ENVIRONS OF ARCACHON

Scale of English Miles

1 2 3

Note

as shown thus

unimproved Roads marked G.C. & L.C.

Trails or compass bearings

followed in walking or riding

paths cut in the forest

of view with heights in metres Δ 60



ARCACHON,

IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE GIRONDE, FRANCE,

ITS ADVANTAGES AS A HEALTH RESORT.

BY

THE REV. SAMUEL RADCLIFF,

BRITISH CHAPLAIN.

"Oceanwards it look'd ; and o'er its wooded heights
The softening breezes of the empurpled sea
Roam'd murmuring, as they gently rock'd
The fragrant pines—watching with sweet delight
The dancing shadows on the moss beneath."

Day Dreams ; A Poem.

London :

THOMAS LAURIE, 31, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1883.

~~20485~~ 1694. e. 2. c



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ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

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HANDBOOK TO ARCACHON.

CHAPTER I.

GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION, AND ACCESSIBILITY OF ARCACHON.

ARCACHON is situated about thirty-five miles west-south-west of Bordeaux, in latitude $44^{\circ} 40'$ N. and longitude $1^{\circ} 15'$ W., on a promontory on the south shore of a large land-locked inlet from the Bay of Biscay, called the "Bassin d'Arcachon," shaped somewhat like an equilateral triangle, and communicating with the open sea by a passage about two miles in width, which runs for some miles in a southerly direction before opening to the westward. The spit of land lying between the open sea and this *bassin* is called "Cap Ferret." It completely shelters the *bassin* from

the Atlantic swell; and the pine forests which cover its ridges of sand-hills break the force of the westerly gales; so that if the entrance were improved the *bassin* would be one of the finest harbours in the world. At present, though there are about twenty feet of water on the bar and in the deep channels at low water, these channels are so tortuous, and the tidal currents so strong, that sailing-vessels can only enter or leave the port in fine weather with a favourable wind and tide; and even steamers cannot cross the bar in very rough weather. The *bassin* is intersected by deep channels, varying from a few hundred yards to about a mile in width, which are navigable by large vessels, and afford excellent anchorage. Between these channels lie large banks of sand or clay, which are covered at high water and exposed at low water. The latter are called *crassats*, and those which have an argillaceous soil are extensively used for oyster culture.

The town of Arcachon, being situated on a promontory, has the *bassin* on three sides of it, and forest on the fourth. This forest, part of which is of very great antiquity, now covers the sand *dunes* along the coast from the Bassin d'Arcachon to the mouth of the Adour, while a corresponding strip of forest covers the *dunes* to the north of the *bassin*, from Cap Ferret to the Pointe de Grave at the mouth of the Gironde. The sowing of these

forests, on what were formerly shifting sand-hills, was chiefly due to the energy of a Government engineer, Nicholas Bremontier, who lived at the close of the last and the beginning of the present century. Inland of these *dunes* lies the great plain of the *Landes*, now almost entirely covered with pine forests, through which the traveller from Bordeaux to Bayonne, Pau, or Tarbes, passes for hours in the train. These forests are for the most part of more recent date than those which cover the *dunes*.

Arcachon, being only thirty-five miles from Bordeaux, is more accessible than any other continental health resort. It is about an hour and a quarter from Bordeaux by express train, twelve or thirteen hours from Paris, four or five-and-twenty from London, about fifteen hours from Marseilles, and five or six from Pau or Biarritz.

The least fatiguing way of reaching Arcachon from England is to go by sea to Bordeaux. The vessels of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company, which sail from Liverpool every alternate Wednesday, are most comfortable, and generally make the passage from Liverpool to Pauillac, where passengers for Bordeaux disembark in a tender, in about fifty or sixty hours. The vessels of the General Steam Navigation Company, which sail from London every Thursday, and run up to the Quay of Bordeaux, are also fine ships, and make

rapid passages, though they are not so large as those of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company. In addition to the vessels of these two great lines, smaller steamers from different British ports carry a limited number of passengers to Bordeaux ; and, in fine weather, the voyage is much less fatiguing than the long railway journey through Paris, and is also considerably cheaper, especially to families travelling with much luggage.

The railway from Bordeaux to Arcachon is one of the oldest in France, having been constructed in the year 1841. It then only ran to La Teste, but was continued to Arcachon in 1857. The country through which it runs is for the most part dull and uninteresting, but a few places of some note may be seen from it. Soon after leaving Bordeaux, shortly before reaching Pessac, it passes the Château Haut Brion, celebrated for its wines. After leaving Pessac it passes the vineyard of Pope Clement V., who was a native of Pessac. The next station, Gazinet, is remarkable as being that from which the gravel for the roads at Arcachon is brought. Being naturally mixed with brick clay, it binds the roads admirably on the loose sand of Arcachon. Pierroton is close to the scene of some of the earliest efforts towards the cultivation of the *landes*, formerly barren, treeless wastes of sand, covered with heather, gorse, and coarse herbage, on which a

few flocks of wretched sheep, tended by shepherds mounted on stilts, endeavoured to preserve themselves from starvation. A hectare (about two and a half acres) was considered to afford pasture for one sheep, which, when killed, seldom weighed over twelve pounds. This barren district is now being brought into cultivation by the planting of pine and other trees, which flourish wonderfully on the sandy soil. It was in the neighbourhood of Pierroton that Monsieur Edmond About was staying when he thought of writing "Maitre Pierre"—a novel which conveys in a very attractive form an immensity of information about the cultivation of the *landes*. Near the station of Croix d'Hins there still remains a considerable tract of uncultivated *lande*, which gives an idea of what the whole country was like before it was planted with trees. In passing through the *landes* a few shepherds, perched upon stilts, and engaged in knitting, or spinning with a distaff, may occasionally be seen from the window of the railway carriage. Near Facture there is a foundry for smelting the iron ore, which exists in considerable quantities in the *alios*, a kind of sandstone, of which a thin layer, impervious to water, is found at about three feet below the surface of the *landes*, and was a principal cause of their barrenness and insalubrity before the introduction of an extensive system of surface drainage. From Facture a well-

kept road runs along the north-east shore of the *bassin* through several towns and villages. A railway is projected in that region. At Lamothe the line crosses the River Leyre, the only stream of any size which empties itself into the *bassin*. Here the lines for Bayonne and Arcachon diverge, the former turning southward, and the latter in a westerly direction along the south shore of the *bassin*. Near Le Teich are fine oak woods belonging to the Château de Ruat. The De Ruats were the last of the *Capitoux de Buch*. The line gains the shore of the *bassin* near Gujan Mestras, and Arcachon may be seen in the distance; but if the tide be out the water is almost invisible, and only the *prés salés* can be observed. The mutton of sheep fed on these *prés salés* is most excellent. One remarks the heaps of tiles used in oyster culture, and sees out in the *bassin* the white covers of the flat-bottomed boats, or *pontons*, on which the guardians of the oyster-beds pass the night. At La Hume the line crosses the remains of the *Canal des Landes*, a canal which was intended to connect the lakes of Cazeau and Parentis with the *Bassin d'Arcachon*. It, and an extensive system of surface draining and irrigation, were the work of a society called the *Compagnie des Landes*, which ruined its shareholders in a partially successful attempt to fertilize the plain of Cazeau. Their work has recently been taken up by MM.

Desforges and Decauville at Villemarie, who, by employing the refuse of Arcachon as manure, and by steam cultivation, have converted a large tract of barren heath into fertile meadows, cornfields, and vineyards. At La Teste a branch line of railway runs to Cazeau. La Teste was formerly the most important place in this region ; and, though inferior in size and population to Arcachon, it is still the *chef-lieu* of the canton. It used to be the abode of the *Captaux de Buch*, many of whom were devoted adherents of the English when Aquitaine belonged to them. Not a vestige of their old *château* remains. Its site is occupied by the cemetery. Soon after leaving La Teste the line enters the Forest of Arcachon, passing through the sandy *dunes* in deep cuttings, and emerging from the forest at the station of Arcachon.





CHAPTER II.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF ARCACHON, SIZE, POPULATION, ETC.

ARCACHON is now a town of about 7000 resident inhabitants; but in the months of August and September the visitors far outnumber the residents. During the rest of the year the number of visitors is comparatively small, but increases year by year as Arcachon becomes better known as a health resort. In those two months the visitors number from 15,000 to 20,000 or upwards; and consist chiefly of families from Bordeaux; but a considerable number of Parisians, provincials, and foreigners of various nationalities, with a small sprinkling of British and American families, spend the summer there. In the winter and spring months the English are to be met with in their greatest numbers. They generally number from 200 to 300; and about double that number of French and foreign strangers winter at Arcachon.

The town stands in a district formerly occupied

by a very beautiful piece of old forest, which has nearly all been removed towards the centre of the town, but of which some remains, almost intact, at the eastern and western extremities. The main street of Arcachon, called the Boulevard de la Plage, with its eastern and western prolongations, called respectively the Boulevard St. Honoré and Boulevard de l'Océan, follows the curves of the shore for a length of nearly three English miles. Between this boulevard and the sea stand a series of hotels and villas, which are best seen from a boat on the *bassin*, but a tolerably good view of them may be obtained from the end of the pier. The *Château* of Monsieur Deganne, the large hotels, and several very handsome villas, are the most conspicuous objects on the shore.

At the eastern and western ends of the town the forest comes quite close to the boulevard, but in the centre the town extends back for some little distance, to the foot of a steep ridge of hill covered with forest. The principal street in this part, running parallel with the Boulevard de la Plage, is the Cours Lamarque de Plaisance, better known to old inhabitants as the Cours St. Anne. The finest part of it is the Place de la Mairie. On the north side of it are the Mairie and market-place, and on the south side a row of villas. Along the crest and southern slopes of the ridge of *dunes* lying to the south of the town the Ville d'Hiver,

or winter town, has been built. It now consists of about 150 villas, of various sizes, placed in the forest, behind and on either side of the Casino, an imposing building in Moorish architecture, which occupies a central position on the crest of the ridge. This ridge of wooded hill crowned by the Casino, the Belvedere, and several handsome villas dotted about among the trees, has a most striking appearance as seen from the windows of the Grand Hôtel, or any of the large hotels in the centre of the town. The fine spire of the church of Notre Dame is a prominent object towards the west.

The Ville d'Hiver is approached by avenues running at right angles to the boulevard. Of these the principal are the Avenue Euphrosine, the Avenue du Casino, and the Avenue François Legallais. At the shore end of the Avenue Euphrosine, between the boulevard and the sea, a new *Place*, called the Place Thiers, has been constructed, with a fine flight of stone steps leading down to the beach.

The Avenue du Casino has also been opened out down to the sea. Those who remember how completely persons who did not possess a villa on the shore used to be shut out from the sea, which they could only approach by narrow, and not always very clean lanes, crowded with bathing boxes, will be able to appreciate the boon con-

ferred on the residents by the opening out of these two vistas. A promenade along the shore is still a desideratum, and will probably long remain so ; for one of the great charms in the possession of a villa on the shore is the advantage the occupants have of bathing from their own gardens, without having to cross a road, or go to a bathing establishment.

The Ville d'Hiver is most picturesquely built. Most of the villas are very pretty, and stand in nicely kept gardens. They are dotted here and there in most charming irregularity, facing all points of the compass, which adds much to their picturesqueness, although it may diminish from the suitability of some of them as winter residences for invalids. The roads are laid out in a labyrinth most puzzling to strangers, but are well kept, and lighted with gas. Besides the villas, the Ville d'Hiver contains the English church, still in an unfinished condition ; also an hotel, several pensions, a grocery, a pharmacy, and two dairies. An open space at the junction of a number of roads is ornamented by a bust of Bremon tier.





CHAPTER III.

WEATHER AND INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE.

THE influence of the forest produces a well-marked distinction between the climate of the Ville d'Hiver and that of the lower town, or Ville d'Eté, as it is sometimes called ; especially those parts of it which are most exposed to the sea breeze ; so that in speaking of the climate of Arcachon it is generally necessary to state whether it is the Ville d'Hiver or Ville d'Eté that is spoken of. Arcachon, generally speaking, has much the same climate as all other towns in the south-west of France ; but this general character is considerably modified by local circumstances, so that the difference in climate between Arcachon and Bordeaux, only thirty-five miles distant, is greater than any one could imagine who had not experience of both districts ; and the same remark may be made of the Ville d'Hiver and Ville d'Eté at Arcachon. No one who had not experience of the place.

could believe what a different influence on the constitution of invalids is exercised by the climate of the sea-shore and that of the forest.

There is a most marked difference in climate between the south-west of France and the south-east. In fact, in my long experience here I have very rarely met with an invalid who had tried both sides of France, and was equally well in either. Those who were well in the Riviera were generally not so well in the south-west; and those who found the south-west to suit them, generally did not find the Riviera to do so. And yet the weather in the south-west is by no means so dry, warm, and sunny as in the south-east. But on the other hand the temperature is more equable. The difference between the day and night, and the sun and shade, temperatures is much less in the south-west than in the south-east; and in no place in the south-west of France is this peculiarity more marked than in the Ville d'Hiver of Arcachon. For some months past I have had an opportunity of comparing, in a useful little journal of this region, the *Pyrenean*, the maxima and minima recorded at Pau and Biarritz with those observed at Arcachon; and I have remarked that while the day temperatures at both those places were considerably higher than at Arcachon, the night temperatures at Pau were very much lower, and those at Biarritz very little higher, than those

of Arcachon. In exposed places in the lower town the extremes of heat and cold are greater than in the Ville d'Hiver. The changes in it are almost if not quite as great as at Biarritz, and the temperature is altogether lower; but the Ville d'Hiver, though it may not enjoy quite so high a day temperature as Biarritz or Pau, is vastly more protected from vicissitudes of climate than either of those fashionable resorts.

The weather at Arcachon, as throughout the entire of the south-west of France, depends upon the winds. Those which blow from off the Atlantic are temperate at all seasons, warm in winter and cool in summer; while those which blow from off the land are cold in winter and hot in summer. The *bassin* has some influence in modifying these, but is not of sufficient extent to exercise much. The westerly winds being the prevailing ones, the climate of the south-west is on the whole wonderfully temperate; but it is subject to periods of cold in winter, or heat in summer, when the land winds blow. The weather in winter may be apportioned to the winds somewhat as follows. Those which blow from any point between north and south-east are cold and generally dry; those which blow from any point between south-east and south, are warm and generally dry; those which blow from south to south-west are warm but often rainy; and those which blow from south-west to

north, are moderately warm, but often rainy. Snow has fallen, on an average, about once in every two years since I have been here ; but we have sometimes passed three or four winters without seeing a flake. It generally falls when northerly winds have been blowing for some days, and when the wind has changed suddenly to the south. It does not often lie long, and the thaws are generally much less damp and chilly than in England, the sandy soil absorbing the moisture as fast as the snow melts. Frost occurs on an average about twenty times in the course of the winter ; but some winters there is hardly any, and others a good deal. I remember one winter in which the thermometer reached the freezing point only nine times, and only twice fell to more than a degree or two below it ; while the following winter there was more or less frost almost every night from the beginning of November till the end of January.

In midwinter the thermometer with westerly winds ranges from about 40° Fahr. at night to 60° Fahr. by day ; but is generally over 45° and under 55° . With easterly winds it ranges from 16° or 20° to 40° or 50° , but is generally over 25° and under 40° . The lowest minimum I have ever observed was 16° . I very rarely observe a range of more than 20° in the twenty-four hours. The range with westerly winds is generally less than 10° in twenty-four hours. With easterly winds

it is greater, generally over 15° in twenty-four hours. A sudden change from south-south-west to north-north-east, or *vice versâ*, will bring the greatest possible range; but such sudden changes are rare, and do not often occur in the space of twenty-four hours. With southerly winds the temperature is sometimes very high, even in mid-winter, ranging from 50° to 70° , or even higher.

The westerly winds, though not cold in winter, are frequently violent. But in the Ville d'Hiver their force is broken by the trees, so that even when a storm is raging the wind is very little felt; and in some specially sheltered spots is not felt at all. I remember hearing a gentleman who inhabited one of the most sheltered villas in the Ville d'Hiver say, that during the whole time he had been there he had never heard "a door bang or a window rattle." The westerly winds also bring a good deal of rain—the average annual rainfall is about thirty-two inches—but the rain falls much more by night than by day. Wholly wet days are not common even in rainy winters; and the sandy soil and pine-trees absorb the moisture, so that the rain dries up quickly, and does not produce much damp. Damp is disagreeably experienced only when either fog or misty rain are blown in from the sea. In one respect it is rather a disadvantage that Arcachon is so nearly surrounded by the *bassin*, because sea-fogs may be

driven into it by winds blowing gently from any quarter except the south. I have more than once watched a bank of fog travelling slowly across the *bassin*, and suddenly enveloping Arcachon in its misty folds. I must say, however, that I have seldom known these sea-fogs, which in some winters are frequent enough, and in others almost entirely absent, to inflict much harm. My experience has been that, no matter what the character of the weather in any one winter may have been (and its character has varied in every one of the sixteen winters which I have spent here), those invalids to whose constitution the climate was suited, have derived benefit from their stay here ; and those who were not very ill indeed, went out in almost all weathers without being the worse for doing so. The influence of the climate is more independent of the weather than might be imagined ; and those who would attempt to judge of its curative efficacy by *à priori* conjectures from meteorological statistics, might be led into very serious error.

In summer the westerly winds are cool and rainy ; and the easterly winds hot and dry. Those which blow from east to south-south-west bring occasionally very intense heat, and are generally followed by thunderstorms. The thunderstorms are sometimes very violent, but hardly ever do any mischief by lightning. The wind and hail which accompany great storms are more dreaded than the

lightning. In summer, westerly winds give a temperature ranging from 55° Fahr. at night to 80° by day, but generally over 60° and under 75° . Easterly winds give a range of from 50° to 98° , which is the highest temperature I have ever observed here. Immediately before thunderstorms the weather, as in England, is very hot and oppressive, no matter from what quarter the wind may chance to blow; but in settled weather the westerly winds are always cool in summer, and, as they are the prevailing winds, the summer at Arcachon is not at all so hot as might be imagined. In settled fine weather there is frequently an alternation of land and sea breezes, the former blowing by night, the latter by day. This alternation brings delightful weather; and the heat becomes unbearable only when the land wind blows both by day and night. Periods of very intense heat seldom last more than three days in succession. Six is the greatest number of very hot days which I have ever known to succeed each other without intermission.

There is a common, but very erroneous, impression that the *Ville d'Hiver* is uninhabitable in summer. That this is not the case is evident from the fact that in no month in the year are so many houses let in the *Ville d'Hiver* as in the month of August. The fact is that the *Ville d'Hiver* has, in summer as in winter, a more equable temperature than the *Ville d'Eté*; and that though it is

never so cool in the Ville d'Hiver as it is on the shore when a fresh sea-breeze is blowing, on the other hand it is never so hot in the Ville d'Hiver as it is in the Ville d'Eté when there is a hot sun and no breeze. I should certainly advise persons who think of spending the summer at Arcachon, and cannot afford to take a villa on the shore, to take one on the crest of the hill in the Ville d'Hiver rather than between the foot of that hill and the boulevard.

For a full account of the influence of the climate upon certain constitutions, I must refer the reader to a *brochure* of Dr. Hameau, translated by me, and entitled "The Climate of Arcachon" (H. S. King, now C. Kegan Paul and Co., London). The place has greatly changed since it was written, and even since it was translated, but the influence of the climate remains exactly as Dr. Hameau has described it. I give here the result of his observations :—

"The climate of the forest of Arcachon is sedative to the nervous system.

"It places certain consumptives in a medium favourable to the cure of their disease, and always to some degree of improvement, when there is a predominance of the nervous system.

"It favours the cure of chronic bronchitis under the same circumstances.

"It is unfavourable to every disease of the chest

in persons of a torpid and lymphatic temperament.

"It suits most asthmatic persons."

I may add to these statements of Dr. Hameau, that not only in diseases of the chest, but in any disease whatever, occasioned by, or complicated with, nervous irritation, the climate of Arcachon will be found beneficial, provided that the patient have not constitutionally a very weak heart, or a very torpid liver. And that, even in these cases, it is less likely to prove injurious than any other of the sedative climates, because the sedative influence of the forest, when too marked, may be counteracted by the stimulating atmosphere of the sea. For Arcachon possesses the almost unique advantage of having in its immediate vicinity two climates—one sedative, the other stimulating—so that in the twenty minutes' walk from the heart of the Ville d'Hiver to the shore of the *bassin*, an invalid can have almost as complete a change of climate, so far as its influence on the constitution is concerned, as in the three or four hours' railway journey from the sedative air of Pau to the bracing atmosphere of Biarritz. This double climate of sea and forest makes Arcachon suitable to a larger percentage of invalids than almost any other health resort; and moreover enables the healthy companions of invalids, who are compelled to reside in the forest, to preserve their health by riding or

walking on the shore, boating, and bathing, when the weather is warm enough ; and, as I have already intimated, even nervous invalids, when they find they have had too much of the sedative air of the forest, may reap much benefit from boating, or walking, or riding on the shore on calm days. Even at Arcachon we do sometimes see healthy members of a family sacrificed to the invalid ; but I venture to submit that the proportion of those so sacrificed at Arcachon is small compared with that of those who suffer in other places from having to reside with invalid relations in climates unsuited to their constitutions. The climate of Arcachon generally agrees extremely well with children, who are usually the greatest sufferers from residence with invalid parents in the health resorts of the south of Europe.





CHAPTER IV.

HOTELS, PENSIONS, VILLAS, ETC.

THE *raison-d'être* of Arcachon being to serve as a health or holiday resort, it follows that its accommodation for visitors is out of all proportion to the resident population. There are six large hotels on the Boulevard de la Plage, and several smaller ones either on the boulevard, or in the town not far from the sea. There is also a pension in the lower town, not far from the sea. In the Ville d'Hiver there is one hotel and there are five pensions.

Of the hotels near the sea the Grand Hôtel is much the finest; but the Hôtels Continental, de France, Jampy, Legallais, and Richelieu are all capable of accommodating comfortably a large number of visitors. Among the smaller hotels I can mention favourably the Hôtels Lavergne and Notre Dame. The pension in the Ville d'Été is the Villa Danty, in the Cours Lamarque de Plaisance, sheltered and sunny, though not so well situated for invalids as if it were in the Ville d'Hiver.

In the Ville d'Hiver the Hôtel de la Forêt occu-

pies a good situation, standing high, yet protected from cold winds. Its aspect is east and west, not north and south. The largest pension in the Ville d'Hiver is the Villa Riquet, situated in a very sheltered region close to the gate of the Parc Pereire, in which the inmates of the Villa Riquet have the right of walking when the family are not at home. The next in size is the Villa Peyronnet, kept by an Irish gentleman and lady. It is close to the English church, is very comfortable, and has a very large and well-sheltered garden. The Villa Bellavista, kept by an English Roman Catholic gentleman and lady, is situated on the crest of the hill near the church of Notre Dame. Though slightly exposed on the north side, its principal rooms are very warm and sunny. Villa Buffon is on the hill overlooking the Casino gardens. Though standing high it is well sheltered, and is near the English church. Villa Souvenir, kept by the daughters of a French Protestant Pasteur, is small, but well situated, near the English church.

The terms *en pension* at all the hotels and pensions range from seven or eight to fourteen or fifteen francs per day, according to accommodation required, number of party, and length of stay.

The hotel and pension accommodation of Arcachon is small in proportion with the number of furnished villas, which are let by the month at rents varying from 100 to 1500 francs per month in the

winter; and from 150 to 2500 francs, or even more, in the summer. The Ville d'Hiver contains, as I have said, nearly 150 villas, of which the greater number are to let, only a very small proportion being constantly inhabited by the proprietor. Along the sea-shore, and in different quarters of the lower town, there are several hundred villas, most of which are to let. N.B. The board with "À LOUER" on it is never taken down, even though the villa be let for a long period. It merely means that it is one which would be let if it were not already occupied. Some quarters of the lower town are not unsuitable for winter, though I should in general give preference to the Ville d'Hiver. The choice of a residence is a subject on which it is well to consult a local physician, or some one who knows the place. The rents in the Ville d'Hiver are almost uniform throughout the year; those in the immediate vicinity of the Casino being slightly dearer in summer than in winter, and those in the sheltered valleys somewhat cheaper. A house in the Ville d'Hiver, with drawing-room, dining-room, three or four bedrooms, one or two servants' rooms, kitchen, scullery, &c., lets at from 300 to 450 francs for one month; at from 750 to 1200 francs for three months; and at from 1250 to 2000 francs for six months. Some of the villas are much better built and furnished than others. Houses in the lower town, and by the sea, vary much in price according to their

situation. Prices are considerably lower at the east end of the town than at the west. Rents of villas on the sea-shore are very moderate in the winter months, but very high in the summer, especially in August and September. In those months a villa on the shore, near the centre or west end of the town, would fetch nearly three times the rent of a house of the same size in the Ville d'Hiver, or about four times as much as the same villa would fetch in winter. Some of the villas by the sea have been specially fitted up for winter use, with glazed verandahs, heating apparatus, &c. ; and these let at nearly the same rent in winter as houses of the same character in the Ville d'Hiver. From October to May the rent of a villa on the beach, of the above-mentioned size, and not specially fitted up for winter use, would be from 100 to 200 francs per month, with proportionate reductions for longer periods. In June the price would be from 300 to 400 francs, and in July from 400 to 500 francs. In August and September it is not easy to procure a well-furnished house of that size on the shore for less than 600 francs. Houses on the opposite side of the boulevard are cheaper ; but I should prefer the hill in the Ville d'Hiver to any situation in the Ville d'Eté not absolutely on the beach.

Furnished lodgings *with attendance* are not easily procured at Arcachon. Many of the householders will let rooms or suites of apartments, and will do

the housemaid's work, sweeping, making beds, &c. ; but almost all of them object to *cooking* for their lodgers, and insist on their obtaining their meals at, or from, a restaurant. The rent of a bedroom near the sea would be from 10 to 25 francs per week in the summer months. In the winter a room may be had at from 20 to 40 francs per month, according to the style in which it is furnished, &c.

All the houses in the Ville d'Hiver, and most of the good ones in other quarters, are supplied with water from an Artesian well, laid on in pipes. In many of the best houses the water is laid on to every story; and some are supplied with both hot and cold water pipes. Several of the villas are lighted with gas, but that is a questionable advantage. The water supply is included in the rent, as are all rates and taxes; but gas has to be paid for separately. Plate and linen are not included in the rent of furnished villas. They can be hired from the house-agents, but at a rather high rate. It is therefore advisable for families who have decided on taking a villa, to bring plate and linen with them. They will also find a few spare blankets and a supply of English dinner knives very useful. Only one woollen and one cotton blanket are allowed to each bed in most of the furnished houses, which is not enough in exceptionally cold weather, and French cutlery, so far as I have had experience of it, is very bad. The number of villas capable of

receiving large families has been greatly increased of late years; so that large and wealthy families are not now obliged, as they often used to be, to leave Arcachon in consequence of not being able to find sufficiently large villas. In view of the uncertainty of the climate proving suitable, I would advise those who do not know it to take their villa for a month, with the option of keeping it on; agreeing, for example, to pay 300 francs if they only remain one month, but to pay only 750, instead of 900 francs if they remain three months. I generally find the house-agents, and the proprietors for whom they act, willing to accede to these conditions. There are a large number of house-agents. The principal agencies are the Agencies Bechade, Brannens, Dubruel, Ducos, Garcias, and Lanauze. The houses for which M. Dubruel is agent, lie chiefly towards the east end of Arcachon. M. Ducos is agent for most of the private houses in the Ville d'Hiver; but some of the other agents have houses there also, especially Messrs. Bechade, Brannens, and Garcias. Besides these private agencies, and some others, which have the sole agency of so few houses that I did not name them, there are two agencies for companies who own land and villas. These are the Domaine d'Arcachon, and the Société Immobilière. Most of the houses of the Domaine d'Arcachon are in the Ville d'Hiver, and all belonging to the Société Immobilière are in the Ville d'Hiver.



CHAPTER V.

HOUSEKEEPING.

THE following hints may be useful to persons about to take villas.

In taking possession of your villa go carefully over the inventory, and see that all broken, damaged, or missing articles are noted on it. If they are not marked on the inventory, you will have to pay for them when giving up the house. The agents are naturally inclined to hurry over the inventory when giving up a house to a tenant, but are much more careful when taking it up from him. The smallest cracks or chips in glass or china should be noticed, and also the slightest stains in chair and table-covers, carpets, and bedding. If you break anything, and replace it yourself, you must see that the article with which you replace it is precisely the same as that broken, otherwise it may be refused. See that everything for which you have stipulated is done before you pay your

rent. Rents are paid in advance, by the month or quarter, as may be agreed upon.

Do not bring out English servants unless you have had them for some time, and thus have become attached to them and they to you ; otherwise you are pretty sure to have trouble with them. Good, faithful English servants are invaluable, especially about an invalid ; but bad ones are a great plague, as they will not conform in any degree to the ways of the country. Servants' wages at Arcachon range from twenty to one hundred francs per month. Housemaids, who are scarce, and often imperfectly trained, from twenty to forty francs. Thorough servants, who will do all the work of a small family, and are often very comfortable, thirty to fifty francs. Cooks (female) from forty to sixty francs. Butlers and *chefs de cuisine*, from sixty to a hundred francs. In addition to their wages, servants expect to have their washing done ; and also require half a litre of wine *per diem* ; but it is customary to give an allowance in money in lieu of wine and washing. The ordinary allowance is ten francs per month ; but some servants expect, and some employers give, more. The cooks who go to market receive from the tradespeople a percentage on the amount of their bills. On this account people who wish to economize had better do their own marketing ; not that they will buy things for less than the cooks can, but because they have not

the temptation the cooks have to make the bills as high as possible. Moreover, people who go to market for themselves can get exactly what they require ; or, if what they want is not to be had, they can get something else that they like in its stead. Of course wealthy people, who wish to save themselves trouble, can pay the cook's bills without inquiry, if they find they are well fed without being too grossly imposed upon. My object in writing these hints is to save expense to people of moderate means.

The cost of living at Arcachon is, so far as I can ascertain, rather less than in most of the Mediterranean health-resorts ; about the same as at Pau ; and slightly greater than at Biarritz. It is not a place in which persons whose incomes are absolutely small can economize. Persons whose incomes are pretty large, say several hundreds or a few thousands of pounds a year, but who find their income insufficient to support their social status at home, would find Arcachon a very good place to live in, because even very wealthy people live there in a very quiet way, and there is not much temptation to spend money, except in the hire of boats and riding-horses ; but persons whose incomes are absolutely very small, barely sufficient to procure the necessaries of life, will find them too dear at Arcachon to allow of their living in the comfort so necessary to invalids.

Meat, bread, milk, and butter, which can all be had of good quality, are quite as dear as in London ; fowl and eggs somewhat cheaper ; groceries are still dearer, but owing to competition between the principal grocers the price has been much reduced lately ; fuel much dearer, but less is required. Coal is cheaper than wood, and coke than either. Vegetables are, for the most part, dearer than in London, but are earlier in season. Some kinds of fruit are cheaper, others dearer ; fish generally cheaper, oysters much cheaper ; claret slightly cheaper, other wines dearer ; washing as dear. On the whole, one's weekly bills at Arcachon would be quite as high as in London, if not higher ; and the only economy possible there is in the style of living.¹

¹ Since writing the above, I have received a letter from a lady, who spent the last three winters at Arcachon, and is now in London, saying that prices there are 20 per cent. higher than at Arcachon.





CHAPTER VI.

EDUCATION—SOCIETY—AMUSEMENTS.

I HAVE said that Arcachon is a very healthy place for children ; and I am frequently asked, " Is it a good place for education ? " In this respect much improvement has been effected at Arcachon of late years, though it is still behind larger towns, especially in the matter of cheapness. A first-class school for boys has been established by Dominican Friars, who have conformed to the requirements of the French Government by laying aside the habit of their order, and by employing certificated teachers, and the books ordered by the Government inspectors. It was originally a school for boys intended for the navy, and possesses two training ships, a barque-rigged vessel of some 200 or 300 tons, and a small schooner yacht. But a classical or commercial education will be given as well as a naval one. It has accommodation at present for about eighty boarders, but more rooms are being built. It stands in a pretty and healthy part of the forest, near the Eglise St. Ferdinand. The name of the school is the Ecole St. Elme, and the director is

the Abbé Baudrand. I could not conscientiously advise Protestant parents to send their children there as boarders ; because, though no direct effort at proselytism is made, boarders are obliged to attend the services in the school chapel, and cannot attend those of the English church. But I can highly recommend the school to parents who think of residing here, and sending their children there as day-scholars. Mr. and Mrs. Webber, of Villa Peyronnet, wish to receive as boarders a limited number of boys, to educate with their own son. Boys sent to them would have all the privileges of the English church, which is at their gates.

Two boarding-schools for girls have been opened lately at Arcachon, but I cannot say whether they are suitable to young ladies of the higher classes or not. I can, however, recommend to them the Cours Notre Dame, founded by Mdle. Paysant, a Parisian lady, and lately made a branch of the Ecole Normale of Paris. An English family named Holderness has resided at Arcachon for some time, and gives instruction in English, German, Music, and water-colour painting. There are besides a large number of certificated visiting tutors and governesses to give private lessons.

Society at Arcachon varies a good deal from year to year, according to the style of the families who happen to winter there ; but in general the people who frequent it are of the upper middle class, such as the families of country gentlemen,

officers, professional and mercantile men. It has not yet become a favourite resort of the titled aristocracy of England, though there does not often occur a season in which there are not some titled persons at Arcachon. Of late years some of the good French families visiting or residing at Arcachon have begun to mix with the English society, associating with them in hunting, lawn tennis playing, and in getting up subscription dances, and *fêtes de charité*. Persons who desire to mix in good French society should make the first call, and come provided with good introductions. In almost all foreign places the English residents expect the visitors to make the first call; but at Arcachon this rule is not strictly adhered to, and most of the residents, or the visitors who have arrived early in the season, call on the new comers, if they fancy their appearance. I should, however, advise families who wish to be visited to bring introductions, if they can obtain them, and to call on the chaplain, or the resident to whom they have an introduction. The best introduction they can have to the chaplain is that of their own parish clergyman.

At Arcachon, as in all other health-resorts, the number of ladies and children is out of all proportion to the number of gentlemen. Fast people, and persons destitute of all resources in themselves, and only happy in a whirl of gaiety, do not like Arcachon, and not many of them go there; but people of cultivated tastes and quiet pursuits gene-

rally enjoy a winter there very much, especially if they have been much overworked and need quiet. There is a great deal of quiet sociability in the way of afternoon teas and small dinner and evening parties. There are also a good many dancing and musical parties. Some of the French and English residents are amateur musicians of a high class. Subscription dances at the Casino, under the management of a mixed committee of French and English gentlemen, are got up every winter. There are very few public amusements in the winter months, so that people who do not join in the social amusements of the place would, unless full of resource in themselves, find it very dull; but no one who mixes in society need be dull at Arcachon.

The principal out-door amusements are riding, boating, and lawn-tennis. The riding in the forest, on the *landes*, and on the beach when the tide is out, is very pleasant. Horses can be hired for two francs per hour. They are generally much better than they look, and some of them are really pleasant beasts to ride. A pack of foxhounds hunts regularly twice a week, meeting near Arcachon on one day to hunt a drag or bagged fox; and meeting at some distance from the town on the other to hunt wild foxes, which are very abundant in the *lande* and the old forest of La Teste. In order to hunt with these hounds one must be a member of the Hunting Lawn Tennis Club, and subscribe either twenty-five francs for one month, sixty francs

for three months, or one hundred francs for eight months, towards the expenses of the pack.

The boating at Arcachon is very good. The *bassin* being completely landlocked, is never too rough for a small boat, except when a strong south-west gale is blowing against the tide. There are quantities of wild-fowl on it in winter, but it is very hard to get near them. Sea-fishing with a line is practised by some of the English and French visitors, and the pike-fishing on the Lake of Cazeau, about twelve miles distant by rail, is very good.

There are two Lawn Tennis Clubs at Arcachon—the Société de Lawn Tennis, near the Railway Station, which has existed for about three years, and the Hunting Lawn Tennis Club, recently formed at the Casino. The former has two good gravel courts; a comfortable reading-room, with French and English newspapers; a billiard-room, with a French table, dressing-rooms, refreshment-bar, &c. The latter has also two gravel courts, which are not yet so good as those of the Société de Lawn Tennis, but might be made so; a covered court in the Kiosque d'Euterpe, or Summer Concert Hall; a reading-room, with French and English newspapers, piano, &c.; a billiard and card-room, dining-room, and dressing-rooms for ladies and gentlemen. There is an excellent restaurant in connexion with the club. The members of this club have the exclusive right of hunting with the Arcachon foxhounds. The subscriptions to both

clubs are precisely the same, and are arranged on a scale which gives a great advantage to persons joining for a long time, and to large parties from the same household. Ladies have the same privileges as gentlemen in the tennis courts and reading-room. Admission to the Société de Lawn Tennis is obtained on the introduction of a member countersigned by a member of the committee. Admission to the Hunting Lawn Tennis Club is on the introduction of two members, subject to the ballot of the committee.

The Hunting Lawn Tennis Club exercises its functions only in the winter months—from October to June. In the summer season it is replaced by the Cercle du Casino, to which gentlemen, annual members of the Hunting Lawn Tennis Club, belong *ex officio*, while the tennis courts are reserved to members of the Hunting Lawn Tennis Club. In short, members of the Hunting Lawn Tennis Club are *ex officio* members of the Cercle du Casino; but members of the Cercle du Casino are not *ex officio* members of the Hunting Lawn Tennis Club.

In summer there are plenty of public entertainments, concerts, theatrical representations, and children's balls. By the way, I omitted to mention that children's parties are very numerous at Arcachon in the winter months, especially in the Christmas holidays. They have always been sensibly conducted, early, and not too luxurious.



CHAPTER VII.

INDUSTRIES.

THE principal industries of Arcachon are the cultivation of the pine forests, fishing, and oyster culture.

From most ancient times the region about Arcachon has been noted for its resinous produce. The poet Ausonius describes the Gauls who occupied this district as the "pitchy Boii." The name Arcachon is supposed by some authors to be a corruption of the word Arcanson, meaning resin. The petite forêt d'Arcachon, which occupied the site of the present town, and the grande forêt or *montagne* de La Teste have been the abode of *résiniers* from time immemorial. Of late years the labours of Bremontier, Chambrelent, and others have covered the whole region with pine forests.

The *résinier* goes out armed with a sort of adze, and carrying a long pole with a number of steps like the steps of a stilt upon it. He cuts away the

bark of the trees, forming a scar about a yard in height and four inches in width, at the bottom of which he fastens an earthen pot to catch the resin which drips from the scar. Two or three, and even more, of these scars are cut each year in a fair-sized tree; and they are carried by degrees up the tree to a height of about twelve or fifteen feet. When the *résinier* cannot reach the spot he wishes to cut, from the ground, he places his pole against the tree, runs up the steps to the requisite height, and then balances the pole at one side of the tree while he does his work.

When the pots are full—they take a longer or shorter time to fill according to the character of the season, but on an average about three or four weeks—they are emptied by women and children into buckets, and the buckets into vats placed here and there in the forest. These vats are in their turn emptied into barrels, in which the resin is carried on mule-carts to La Teste, or some other town in the neighbourhood of the forest, to be distilled into spirits of turpentine, &c.

As a general rule they begin to score the trees when they are about twenty-five years old, and continue the process for fifteen or twenty years, or more. The tree is then cut down to make room for the seedlings, which are continually cropping up. In the old forest, however, the big trees are scored till they have attained an immense age and size. I

have counted upwards of thirty scars round a tree. These old trees when heavily scored bulge out to a great size. The timber of scored trees has a closer grain than that of trees from which the resin has not been extracted, and is of more value to a carpenter ; but the timber of the maritime pine is not of much value except for railway sleepers, telegraph poles, pitwood, and firewood.

The pine-trees are also subjected to a peculiar process for extracting the sap, which is used medicinally. Untapped trees are cut into lengths, and the sap forced out by hydraulic pressure. This sap, called *Sève de pin*, is a valuable remedy in certain cases of chronic bronchitis, &c. When the sap is not required for medicinal purposes, sulphate of zinc is mixed with the water which is employed in forcing it out ; and the wood is thus rendered much less liable to rot when employed under water or under ground. There is a considerable trade in pitwood between Arcachon and Cardiff. Vessels carrying coals from Cardiff, for the use of the steamers of the Pêcheries de l'Océan, return laden with cargoes of pitwood.

The inhabitants of the villages round the *bassin* used in former days to engage largely in fishing, both in the *bassin* and the open sea ; but, of late years the great bulk of the fishing is done by the steamers of the Pêcheries de l'Océan. They are Clyde-built vessels of about eighty tons, and trawl

in the Bay of Biscay. One comes in each day with the fish which all have caught during the night. They take large quantities of sole and other fish, which are sent by express train to Paris, and other large inland towns. During the winter months, whenever a north-east wind blows, the Breton fishermen arrive in their *chaloupes*, and bring in large quantities of fish. The sardine fishery is carried on in the summer months in small boats by the inhabitants of La Teste, Gujan, and other towns on the *bassin*.

Most of the Arcachon fishermen have given themselves up to the cultivation of oysters; and oyster breeding is now the industry *par excellence* of the locality. The process may be briefly described as follows:—In May, June, and July, large quantities of common house-tiles, covered with a kind of whitewash, are laid down in the *bassin*. The *naissain* or spawn adheres to these tiles, and little oysters form upon them; the lime of the whitewash aids the young oyster to form his shell. At the approach of winter the tiles are taken up, and the whitewash is scraped off, bringing away the young oysters without injuring the shells. The oysters are then placed in cages formed of wood and wire, to protect them from crabs, starfish, and other enemies of their species; and when sufficiently grown to fend for themselves, are laid in *claires*, or pits dug in the mud-banks, to prevent their being

frozen in the winter nights, or scorched in the summer days at low water. These *claires* are provided with sluices, to enable the water to be changed, and also to train the oysters to do without water before being sent on a journey. When they are about eighteen months old they are chiefly exported to the Marennes, Whitstable, and other places, to be fattened. It seems that places suitable for breeding oysters are not favourable to fattening them, and *vice versâ*. By this process about two hundred millions of oysters are reared annually in the *bassin*, of which a considerable number are sent direct to the consumers without being fattened elsewhere; but the great bulk of them are sold to proprietors of fattening beds. The wholesale price of oysters of eighteen months is from 10s. to 1*l.* per thousand. Full-grown oysters sell at from 2*l.* to 3*l.* per thousand, according to size and quality. Fair-sized oysters are retailed at from 4*d.* to 6*d.* per dozen, and large ones at from 6*d.* to 1*s.* per dozen.





CHAPTER VIII.

GENERAL INFORMATION.

THE rapid growth of Arcachon, though in a new country like America or Australia it would be thought nothing of, is almost unparalleled in France. When it became a separate commune, in the year 1857, the number of inhabitants was estimated at about 300. In 1866 the population was 736; and in 1881 it was 7005. The octroi in 1858 produced less than 10,000 francs. In 1870 it produced nearly 78,000 francs; and in 1881, upwards of 201,000 francs. The revenue derived by the State from the forest which occupied the site of Arcachon, was 150 francs a year; and now the direct taxes amount to 160,000 francs; while the excise duties alone reached in 1881 the respectable figure of 120,000 francs. In 1870 the receipts of the post office were upwards of 112,000 francs; and in 1881 upwards of 600,000 francs. These figures may serve better than anything, short of personal inspection of the place, to correct a prevalent impression,

derived from the reports of visitors of former years, that Arcachon is only a little village.

In 1866, almost all the shops of Arcachon were branches of shops at La Teste, and were closed quite early in the afternoon. I have a lively recollection of having forgotten to order dinner one day, and having hunted in vain about three o'clock in the afternoon for a butcher's shop. Now one shop in Arcachon, doing a good trade, will do more in a day than all the shops of the same kind in La Teste put together. The market in 1866 was held under a small archway, which is now the entrance to the Mairie. It is now held under a shed about forty yards square, which, being too small, will soon be replaced by a much larger one in iron. It is open daily from eight a.m. to noon ; and is well supplied with butcher's-meat, fish, poultry, butter, eggs, vegetables, and fruit. All these articles can be procured, after market-hours, in the various shops in the town. There are several large groceries, in some of which English articles may be obtained at prices moderate for France. Though, as I have already stated, provisions are not so cheap at Arcachon as many people expect to find them, they can be obtained of very good quality.

There are three banks at Arcachon where money can be changed ; M. F. Audap is correspondent of several London banks. Baudens and Cie. are also able to exchange money on favourable terms.

There are six French physicians at Arcachon. Dr. Chartres has until this winter been the sole English physician practising here, he having purchased the practice ; but owing to his long illness, and absence from Arcachon, Dr. Walter Bourne has obtained an authorization to practise from the French Government. There are five pharmacies, of which one is in the Ville d'Hiver. M. Soulan, opposite the Grand Hôtel, has an English assistant, so has M. Sudre at the Pharmacie de la Forêt. There are two dentists, one of whom, Mr. Leys, has practised in England for many years.

M. A. de Lobel, Villa Marie Thérèse, St. Ferdinand, is the British Vice-Consul.

There are two Roman Catholic churches, one French Protestant temple, a Jewish synagogue, and the English church, St. Thomas, in the Ville d'Hiver. At the Roman Catholic churches there are several services during the day. At the French Protestant church there is one service each Sunday. At the synagogue there is one service every day, and two services on Friday and Saturday. At the English church there is daily Morning Prayer in the winter months, and two services every Sunday throughout the year. The Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday and holyday, and the chaplain holds a little Sunday-school before morning service. All the sittings are free. The expenses of the services, and stipend of the chaplain, are paid by the voluntary

contributions of the congregation, supplemented by a grant of twenty pounds per annum from the Colonial and Continental Church Society. The church is incomplete, as it is being built by instalments, that it may grow with the growth of Arcachon. The debt on the present building is almost extinguished ; but funds are needed to build the chancel, vestry, and west front.

There are three French lending libraries, and a small English one, in connexion with the church. It consists chiefly of children's books, and books for Sunday reading, but contains some standard novels, and works of general literature.





CHAPTER IX.

OBJECTS OF INTEREST.

THIS chapter is designed to inform persons who have only one day to spend at Arcachon, what is best worth seeing. On arriving, ascertain when it will be low water, and engage a boat to visit the oyster beds. One or two hours on the water will be sufficient, and the rest of the day may be spent on shore. Take a carriage or walk to visit the Aquarium of the Société Scientifique. There is an interesting museum, containing models of the instruments, &c., used in pisciculture and oyster-breeding; and a good collection of shells, and antiquities discovered in the region. Drive on to the Pointe de l'Aiguillon, and inspect the Poissonerie of the Pêcheries de l'Océan, and one of the large oyster establishments. Proceed by the Cours Desbieys, passing the Ecole St. Elme. After passing the Ecole, returning towards the railway on the Boulevard Déganne, dismount from the carriage,

and walk into the forest on the left-hand side of the road. There are some fine old pine-trees, about ten or twelve feet in girth, on the side of the hill about fifty or one hundred yards from the road. Cross the railway at the level crossing, and proceed by the Cours Desbieys to the gas works. The artesian well which supplies Arcachon with water is situated there. The reservoirs are on the hill to the left. The telegraphic wire which crosses the road runs through the forest to the Pointe du Sud, where there is a semaphore to communicate with passing vessels. Ascend the hill to the Ville d'Hiver, and visit the Casino. The gardens are very pretty, and there is a lovely view from the terrace in front of the building. Bid your driver to meet you at the Belvedere, and walk across the *passerelle* to it. The view from the Belvedere is very fine. In the summer months there is a charge of fifteen centimes for ascending it, but in winter it is free. Visit the *buvette* of the Sève de pin; and then proceed to the church of Notre Dame. The old chapel to the left of the church is interesting. There is over the altar a very ancient image of the Blessed Virgin and the Holy Child, which was picked up on the shore by the preaching friar Thomas Illyricus. The present chapel is the third which has been built for its reception, the others having been overwhelmed by the sand. The Pélerinage d'Arcachon, in former

years, when the little chapel stood in a beautiful piece of old forest, with a fine avenue of oak-trees running down to the *bassin*, and when crowds of pilgrims came in boats, on stilts, and in bullock-carts, and picnicked in the forest, used to be a most picturesque sight; but now the forest in that region is mostly cut away, the old oak-trees have disappeared, and are replaced by houses, and the pilgrims come by train.

After leaving Notre Dame, drive down the Avenue St. Marie and Boulevard de l'Océan to see the handsome villas in that quarter. Then return by the Avenue St. Arnaud, and Avenue Bremon tier, to the gate of the Parc Pereire, opposite the Villa Riquet. N.B. I omitted to say that, before starting for a drive, it would be well to procure, if possible, an order to visit this park. Orders are to be obtained from M. Sarraquy, Avenue Euphrosine, near the post and telegraph office. If you have obtained an order, walk through the park. The footpath on the top of the hill to the right of the avenue affords the nicest views. Then visit the cemetery, if you have any interest in it. The only English personage of note buried there is Miss Charlotte Williams Wynn, well known from her charming letters.

Drive on to Moulleau. At the Abatilles is the kennel of the Arcachon fox-hounds. Moulleau is a village somewhat like what Arcachon was

thirty or forty years ago ; but the forest there is not so pretty as the forest of Arcachon used to be. There is a monastery of the Dominicans there ; but the monks have been dispersed, and their chapel closed, by order of the Government. There is a beautiful strand. Return to Arcachon, driving through the Ville d'Hiver, and get your driver to show you the bust of Bremontier, the English church, and the villas occupied by the present King and Queen of Spain, at the time of their betrothal.





CHAPTER X.

EXCURSIONS—CONCLUSION.

THE excursions about Arcachon have to be made chiefly on horseback, on foot, or in a boat. There are but few carriage roads running to any distance from Arcachon. It is consequently not a good place to bring a carriage to. Very comfortable carriages can be hired at from 2 fr. 50 c. to 3 fr. 50 c. per hour. The principal road is that leading to Bordeaux. At La Teste, a road branches off to Cazeau, to which place there is also a railway; and at La Hume a road leading through the *landes* to Sanguinet, a small town on the east shore of the lake of Cazeau. These roads, and all those in the district of the *landes*, are very level, and admirably adapted to a cyclist; but in order to make a circular tour, and avoid coming home by the same road by which one has gone, one must do a long day's work. A nice trip for a cyclist in good training would be to Sanguinet (thirty kilomètres),

thence to Salles (about twenty kilomètres), thence to Facture (about fifteen kilomètres), and home to Arcachon (twenty kilomètres). A kilomètre is about 1090 yards. Eight kilometres, five miles.

The principal excursions by water are those to the lighthouse on Cap Ferret, and to the different villages round the *bassin*. The view from the top of the lighthouse is very fine. A wooden causeway, for the use of which there is a charge of twenty-five centimes, leads across the sands to the shore of the ocean, on which there is frequently a magnificent surf. In the summer months a steamer plies between Arcachon and Cap Ferret, landing its passengers at a pier about three-quarters of a mile from the lighthouse. A tramway leads from the pier to the shore of the ocean.

A very interesting, but little known boating expedition, which must be made in calm weather, and at low water, is to the Dune de la Grave, a high cliff of sand opposite the entrance of the *bassin*. One lands at the Pilat, from whence it is about a mile to the top of the cliff. At the top the sand has been blown up freshly, since the year 1870, and now has formed a new dune, about thirty feet high, on the top of the old dune, which was already one of the highest in the country. The view from this mountain of sand is very fine, over the open sea, the *bassin*, the old and new forests, and the *landes*. A visit to it is interest-

ing to a geologist, as it shows how all the dunes in this country have been formed. It also serves to teach one the magnitude of the task which Bremon tier undertook, in attempting to cover all the dunes with forest.

The Pointe du Sud, about four miles beyond the Dune de la Grave, can also be reached in a boat, but only in fine weather with favourable tide. Both these places are easily reached by a good walker on foot, or by riders on horseback. When the tide is out, the sands are firm, and most agreeable for walking or riding. The view from the Pointe du Sud is not to my mind so fine as that from the Dune de la Grave, and it is ten miles, not six, from Arcachon. Carts with wide wheels can be hired at Arcachon, for visiting places to which there is no carriage-road.

Riding is the most agreeable way of going through the forest, as walking in it is fatiguing, especially to persons unaccustomed to walking in the sands. Both in walking and riding in the forest, one should avoid as much as possible going on the paths of loose sand, and keep on the comparatively firm surface formed by the moss and pine leaves. It is also well for strangers to carry a pocket compass. Provided with one, they can never be lost. As the forest is only a belt of a few miles in width, and runs north and south, it follows that when one wishes to return home, if

he goes in a northerly direction he must emerge from the forest at or near Arcachon. When one is out some little way in the forest, all the paths lead to La Teste.

The prettiest part of the forest close to Arcachon lies just behind the Ecole St. Elme, between the railway and the La Teste road. It still conveys some idea of what the old forest is like. Another very pretty part is the district behind the Moulin de Braouet, near La Teste. On the way to it one can visit the Cippe de Bremontier, a monument in Pyrenean marble, which stands on a hill close to the track leading from Moulleau to La Teste. It is much to be wished that this track were made into a good carriage-road, to enable visitors at Arcachon to make a circular drive, going out by Moulleau and returning by La Teste, or *vice versa*. Just at present very lovely views may be obtained from the Dune des Pissens, which is easily reached by going on to the south of Moulleau, and turning up the hill to the left about a mile beyond the village. The trees have lately been cut away from this hill; but the seedlings will, in a few years, grow up and obscure the views.

The most beautiful part of the forest is the old forest, or *grande forêt* de La Teste. It lies about five or six miles to the south of Arcachon, and covers an area of about thirty square miles. It contains some magnificent pine-trees, many of

them upwards of twelve feet in girth. The largest I have measured was eighteen feet in girth. There are also pollard oaks of great thickness, and a rich undergrowth of hawthorn and blackthorn, arbutus, holly, butcher's box, heather, and bracken ferns. Here and there are open clearings with large trees dotted over them, which remind one of the scenery in an English deer-park ; while the little dun-coloured cattle which graze on them are not unlike deer. Between this forest and the *lande* are marshes planted with birch, aspen, and other trees. The *Erica Lusitanica*, a beautiful white heath, and the *Osmunda* fern, flourish in these marshes.

This beautiful forest was formerly accessible only to good walkers, or persons able to ride ; but the making of the road and railway to Cazeau have brought it within the reach of very moderately good walkers. It is within a few minutes' walk of any of the stations of the Cazeau railway, and equally accessible from the road, which runs alongside of the railway ; so that people who do not care to spend a whole day out, as they must do if they go by train to Cazeau, or any station on the Cazeau line, can drive out, and return either by rail or road.

The Lake of Cazeau is a very fine sheet of water, twenty miles in circumference. The railway runs to the shore of the lake. Boats for fishing, or rowing on the lake, can be hired. The fishing is the

property of a club. I believe that, *in strict law*, the club has no power to prohibit any one from spinning for pike ; but I think most gentlemen would prefer obtaining their permission to fish. The pike, perch, tench, and eels of this lake are most excellent, far superior to the coarse fish of any other water that I have tasted. The old forest comes down to the shore of the lake, and juts out in picturesque promontories, of which I have seen some very pretty sketches.

The finest view in the old forest is that from the Truc de la Trucque, a hill rather more than 200 feet in height, distant about two and a half miles from the station of Le Courneau ; and about four miles from La Teste. To reach it from Le Courneau follow the track which leads into the forest, and soon after crossing a little brook, called the Craste Nezer, turn to the right, skirting a marsh on your right for about half a mile. When by skirting this marsh you have turned round towards the north, go straight on through the forest in a northerly, or north-easterly, direction for about a mile, and then inquire if you are near the Truc, or hunt about till you find it. There is a stone on top of the Truc, so that if you reach the top, you can be sure you have not made a mistake. There are several tracks by which the Truc may be reached from La Teste, but the easiest to find is that through Le Becquet. To find Le Becquet, follow the Cazeau road to the

Pont de Saou, if you are on foot or on horseback, and then follow the railway to near the sixth kilomètre ; but if you are in a carriage, keep on the road for a couple of kilomètres beyond the *pont*, to the place where the railway meets the road again ; then return back along the line to the sixth kilomètre. A few yards to the La Teste side of the kilomètre post there is a path leading to the west-south-west ; follow it till you reach Le Becquet, a clearing with a few houses and some old oak-trees in it. From the hillock on which these houses stand you can see the Truc bearing west-south-west. Go straight on for nearly a mile, and then hunt about for the hill. Returning, on foot or horseback, you can go directly to La Teste by a much shorter way, taking any of the tracks which lead in a northerly direction. The Truc commands a most extensive view over the *landes*, the old and new forests, the *bassin* of Arcachon, and the Lake of Cazeau. When the sky is *most exceptionally* clear, the chain of the Pyrenees may be distinguished rising above the horizon behind the Lake of Cazeau like a saw above the edge of a table. The horizon is often perfectly distinct, while the mountains are invisible. They are about 120 miles distant.

There are some very pretty views from the dune which separates the old forest from the new. In one place this dune forms a sharp ridge very steep

on both sides. The different aspects of the two forests as seen from it is very striking. A gap has been cut in the trees on top of this ridge for the purpose of netting woodcocks and pigeons. A net is stretched across this gap at night, which is watched by men sitting in little huts at either side. When a bird flies into the net they knock it over with sticks. Occasionally large flights of woodcock visit the forest, and a good shot may make a good bag; but there is such an extent of cover that one may walk all day without seeing a bird, while another with better luck may kill several. I should not recommend any one to come to Arcachon purposely for the woodcock shooting, but a man fond of walking might take out his gun on chance, and if he finds game well and good, but if not he will, at all events, have a good walk in a pretty country.

Walking or riding direct from Arcachon to the old forest, one may either go out by Moulleau and the sea shore as far as Le Pilat, or by a valley behind Moulleau, which I call the long valley; or else skirting the edge of the forest on the La Teste side, or passing through La Teste itself. The way to get into the long valley is to follow the Moulleau road to the Pavillion Imperial, often called the Maison Rouge, at the Abatilles, then take the road to the left and follow it for about 300 yards, to where it turns round

towards the west. Then leaving it, plunge into the forest and go south. The long valley affords a comparatively level route into the heart of the forest.

The map which accompanies this book has been drawn under my supervision, and I have traced on it in red the directions to follow in taking nice walks or rides in the forest. But it must be distinctly understood that these lines do not mean roads; and that often they are merely compass bearings, not following any track whatever. It is exceedingly difficult to give directions, except compass bearings, for going through the forest; and to me one of the great charms of the forest, before I became familiar with its paths, was the going off compass in hand and exploring it for myself; and this is what I would recommend my readers to do. They may not succeed at first in finding the places they look for, but they will still have them as objects for their ride or walk. One may walk or ride through the forest for hours on a stormy day, and yet rarely feel a blast of wind. Though the tops of the trees may be violently agitated, the air beneath them is almost still; and it is only in crossing a *garde-feu*, or ally cut through the trees, or on the side of a hill exposed to the wind, that its force is felt in the least. To nervous invalids who are set coughing by wind, this shelter is an invaluable boon, enabling them to take exercise

in the open air on a day which, in a less favoured region, would infallibly confine them to the house.

I have thus briefly set forth the advantages which Arcachon offers as a health-resort, without endeavouring to conceal its disadvantages. Many of the latter are capable of being remedied, as many which it formerly had to contend with have been remedied. Certain circumstances, which by some would be considered disadvantages, are advantages in the eyes of others. It is a place which is constantly changing, and most of the changes are for the better. Possibly, before this little book is printed, some of the information contained in it will be out of date ; but, in its main features, I think it will be found a compendium of useful and trustworthy information concerning a place of which it has always been exceedingly difficult to obtain an unprejudiced account. It is hard to say whether the ill-judged and mendacious flattery of its partisans, or the equally mendacious and rancorous abuse of its enemies, has done the more harm to Arcachon ; but I quite agree with Dr. Hameau, who predicts that it will yet hold a high place in the resources of the healing art, "*en dépit des critiques passionnées, et des louanges plus exagérées encore, qu'on ne lui épargne pas.*"







